

Catholic Charities

Diocese of Joliet

"Love works miracles every day"

Marguerite DeValois

Miracle Moments . . .



Every morning, Dominique brings her energetic and playful four-year-old little boy to Catholic Charities' Head Start at St. John's Center in Joliet. And once a week, Dominique welcomes Catholic Charities into her home to provide Home Based services to her happy, talkative 1 ½ year-old daughter who has physical challenges with her hands. And then, sometimes, Dominique, a strong young woman, takes some much needed time for herself.

Dominique came to Catholic Charities about a year ago when she heard about the Head Start program from others in her neighborhood. Head Start is a program where children from low-income families, or children with diagnosed disabilities, age three to five, learn, play and socialize before they start kindergarten. Dominique enrolled her son in the half-day program to prepare him for kindergarten and beyond. He loves school, his teachers and especially his classmates. He has made a lot of friends in the program. Dominique is also very pleased with the progress her daughter has shown because of Head Start's Home Based Program. Through this component of Head Start, a teacher visits Dominique's home on a weekly basis and works with her daughter providing lessons and activities that enhance her physical and mental development. Once a month they also go to a socialization event at one of the Head Start centers so parents and children from the program can have the opportunity to play and learn together.

Dominique is very grateful for Toni, the Head Start Family Service Worker, who helps make sure this family's basic needs are met, including taking Dominique and her daughter to physical therapy appointments, doctor appointments, managing her son's medical and school records, and connecting Dominique with other needed resources within the community. "Toni is great. She is someone I can talk to when I need to get things off my chest. Things can get stressful and she is always there to listen when I need someone," said Dominique.

With all of the assistance Dominique has received from Catholic Charities, it has given her time to think about her own future. Her goals are to find a new place to live, buy a car and make a better life for her and her family. She is interested in going back to school to become a Certified Nurse's Assistant, a career she has always wanted to pursue. "I want to better myself; for me and my children." And with her strength, courage and obvious determination, she will.